

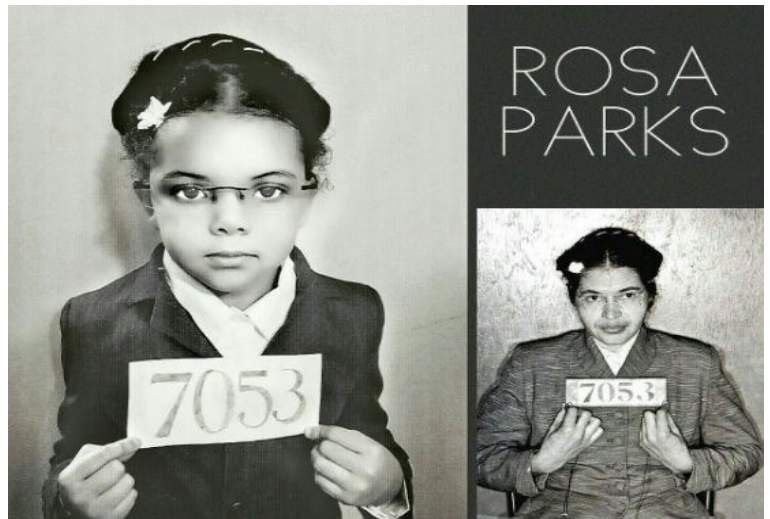
# Circle of Fellowship

February, 2018

The First Universalist Society of  
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## Our Mission Statement

The mission of the First Universalist Society of Central Square is to be a welcoming, diverse congregation which values spiritual growth and service to the local and world community



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# UU Congregations covenant to affirm and promote justice , equity and compassion in human relations

## Green Minute

### China Says “Keep Your Trash”

According to the New York Times and the Huffington Post, China had been processing at least half of the world’s exports of waste paper, metals and used plastic beginning in the 1980’s but in July, China told the World Trade Organization that it intended to ban 24 types of solid waste as of January 1, 2018, saying the action was needed to protect the environment and improve public health. China said, “Large amounts of dirty wastes or even hazardous wastes are mixed in the solid waste that can be used as raw materials,” Beijing wrote to the W.T.O. “This polluted China’s environment seriously.” China said that much of the recyclable material the country received from overseas had not been properly cleaned or was mixed with non-recyclable materials.

Western leaders have described this decision as “disastrous” and effectively an “earthquake” to the recycling industry. Canadian, German, British, Irish and U.S. solid waste managers are reporting that they are already stockpiling plastics because they have no way to get rid of them. As recyclers and governments rush to figure out what to do with their mounting garbage, environmental activists warn that the initial effects of China’s ban could prove detrimental to the environment and human health. Greenpeace said, “There are fears that the ban will simply lead to these huge quantities of waste being exported to less-developed, less well-regulated waste industries.” They point to India, Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand. Greenpeace continues by saying there are, “no new waste markets with equivalent capacity to China’s.” That means even if some waste is transported to other destinations, a lot of garbage could still end up getting incinerated by countries that would have otherwise exported it. The non-profit organization Break Free From Plastic says, “This would then turn the problem into a toxic pollution issue. The burning will contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and release cancer-causing dioxins.”

However, activists have stressed that there could be many positive effects of the ban. Exporting countries may be forced to consider ways to cut down on their waste and to improve their own recycling systems. Greenpeace said in a statement, “This regulation will send shockwaves around the world, and force many countries to tackle the ‘out of sight, out of mind’ attitude we’ve developed toward waste,” Already, the U.K. and the European Union have unveiled plans to reduce waste. The EU said that it plans to phase out single-use plastics and to make all packaging reusable or recyclable by 2030. British Prime Minister Theresa May said that the U.K. would eliminate all avoidable plastic waste within 25 years. These benchmarks are a long time away but they are a start.

More locally, beginning in March 2017, New York State created a Plastic Bag Task Force which has made a list of the following options to be considered: Strengthen and enforce the existing New York State Plastic Bag Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Act. Require bag manufacturers to pay for recycling. Impose a fee on single-use plastic bags. Impose a fee for each transaction in which customers get bags. Impose a fee on plastic and paper bags. Ban single-use plastic bags altogether. Ban plastic bags and put a fee on "allowable alternatives." Leave current laws alone. We’ll see what decision the state makes regarding these options.

Let’s hope China’s decision will have wide ranging positive effects on the amount of waste we generate. We should encourage our leaders to take actions now.

Ellen LaPine

Social Justice Committee

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sion in human relations

**Ministerial Musings for Februar**

We are still deep in the heart of winter and I imagine each of us curled in our own separate dens, waiting for that first blade of grass to appear. While we are huddled into ourselves, I think of the amount of work within us that is going on, however invisible it may be. We are all thinking and reasoning creatures and the winter is often the time that we are able (or forced) to do a lot of that. This can be a good thing, or a not so good thing, depending. As a card carrying bibliomaniac, it is wonderful to have the time to read and reflect, whether it's a silly mystery or a book that involves learning more about the world and, I hope, rearranging some of my preconceptions. But sometimes too much time alone with our thoughts can leave us vulnerable to our darker memories and fears. It is often a question of balance. Time to be alone; time to be with others. Even the groundhog tries the outer air in February.

Come out and share what's been happening in your den with those who care.

Andrea Abbott

**Sermon Schedule**

February 4th: David Weissbard

February 11th: Andrea Abbott

February 18th: Bud Adams

February 25th: Andrea Abbott

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**Religious Education**

Did you ever think to yourself, I am only one person. What can I do?

It starts with word, or thought and concludes with an action.

This month we will be exploring what we can do.

Everyone deals with stress no matter how young or old.

We will be discussing ways to cope. What we can do, and then follow through with our actions.

One simple action can create an avalanche of possible outcomes.

We will create Soul Collage cards. I am the one who..... as an extension of what we have discussed.

Ending the month learning how to meditate with a simple pebble meditation designed to make meditating fun for kids.

But still give them the basics needed.

**RE Director Ronna Schindler**

**Refreshment Schedule**

February 11: Potluck and see page 5 for the film. Come join us!

February 18: We need volunteers

February 25: Judy and George Tennant

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### UU Universe

Many people are going to see the film, “The Post”, but few may know the role Beacon Press played in those historic events involving the Pentagon Papers. Thanks to Janie Garlow who sent people this story. Click on this link at UUA Archive to read the story:

<http://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org/featured-new/the-pentagon-papers-and-the-unitarian-universalist-association-how-the-uaa-was-almost-destroyed-by-the-decision-to-publish/>

### Notable Pieces of Interest for UUs

I chose this piece to highlight Black History Month. It’s an unusual piece from Aeon, a humanities and science website which has some rich finds such as this one and the one below. This is about an African American man’s struggles to write beautiful poetry. It’s an animated video here:

<https://aeon.co/videos/the-african-american-poet-who-travelled-1200-miles-to-harvard-only-to-be-thrown-in-jail>

Here’s a piece questioning some assumptions we all may have made about nuclear security and peace:

<https://aeon.co/essays/nuclear-deterrence-is-more-ideology-than-theory>

I am always asking people what they are reading and a member of the congregation, Janet Jenkins read and highly recommends this novel to us: **Orphan Train**: A Novel by Christina Baker Kline. This is a story based on the orphan trains that carried orphan children from the East Coast to the Midwest between 1854-1929. Highly recommended. What are you reading?

### Church Events Calendar

Ellen and Janet invite you to come help paint the downstairs community room and bathroom on Monday, February 12.

The Social Justice Committee and UU Circle invite everyone to participate in a potluck lunch following the service on February 11. The movie will focus on the Social Justice Committee’s current theme of racial inequality. “When Heritage Equals Hate” is an eye-opening review of original sources that reveal some of the roots and history of white supremacy in the U.S. Please plan to bring a dish, watch the movie and share impressions towards a more connected and peaceful community.

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**Building  
Beloved  
Community  
Beyond  
the Binary**

**Saturday February 10 2018**

**9:00AM-4:30PM**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

109 Waring Road

Syracuse, NY 13224

**Keynote Speaker: S. Bear Bergman**

In addition to Bear we will be offering many workshops. For folks who want to be good allies but don't know much about gender-nonconforming issues there will be workshops such as **Trans 101**, and a **panel discussion with gender non-conforming folk**. For folks who live beyond the binary workshops such as **Trans Inclusive Medicine**, **Trans Parenting** will be offered as well as time for a **Name and Documents Legal Clinic**. And for all focused on the future a ;

**De-Escalation Workshop.**

**Three Problems Facing Trans Communities (and Three Solutions Anyone Can Help With)**

Tickets available at

<http://buildingbelovedcommunitybeyondthebinary.eventbrite.com>